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Chairman: Mr. Rosenthal ..... (Guatemala)
Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. Mselle

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The meeting was called to order at 10.40 a.m.

Agenda item 117: Programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001 (*continued*)

Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations (A/55/305-S/2000/809, A/55/502 and A/55/507 and Add.1)

1. **The Secretary-General** said that the critical task of strengthening the Organization's effectiveness and capacity in the area of peace and security, as proposed in the report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations (A/55/305-S/2000/809), was of paramount importance for the ability of the United Nations to carry out an essential part of its mission. He had established the Panel in the belief that the Organization could not continue to do business as usual in its peace operations. Too often and in too many places over the past decade, inadequate mandates and insufficient means and Headquarters support had led to calamities for the vulnerable people whom the United Nations sought to serve, for the brave and committed peacekeepers in the field and for the Organization itself. The gravity of that record was indisputable; the question, rather, was whether the world community would collectively rise to the challenge and whether the representatives of the Member States would help the Organization to help the peoples they represented by authorizing the changes and improvements called for in the Panel's report. While he did not intend to pre-empt the conclusions of the forthcoming report of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, he wished to highlight the urgency and importance of the issue.

2. The Panel's report examined a whole range of areas in which the United Nations had been too slow, too tied up in red tape, too weak or too fragmented to deal effectively with conflicts. From early warning to mission planning to the use of modern communications and information technology, the report represented the most significant effort to improve crisis response within the United Nations since the latter's founding. The Organization and the Member States must answer its call. He was aware of the larger issues surrounding his emergency request: the fact that strengthening Headquarters capacity would not solve all the problems currently facing peacekeeping; the need for Member States to summon the political will to supply the Organization with the troops and civilian personnel it needed to succeed; and the concern that not all peacekeeping duties were shared equally by the Member States and that not all missions mandated by the Security Council received equal or even adequate support. He shared the concern of the many delegations which had deplored the "commitment gap" and the lack of political will to contribute to peacekeeping in Africa.

3. There was a basic and urgent need not only to address those fundamental political and structural issues, but also to strengthen the ability of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to support and guide operations in the field. It was in the field that the Organization failed or succeeded. It was on the ground, with an effective military and civilian presence and with competent command and control structures, where the Organization could help or hinder, and where it must be strengthened. That was the first priority: to achieve real and immediate improvements in the Organization's operational capacity. That was truly an emergency requirement that demanded emergency action. If the Committee deferred action on the emergency package, peacekeeping personnel in the field and the peoples they sought to serve would inevitably be the ones who suffered, and the Organization's operational capabilities would inevitably be weakened on the ground.

4. The resources proposed represented less than half of one per cent of the current regular budget appropriations, and those proposed in respect of the support account represented less than one and a half per cent of current peacekeeping costs. Those amounts were not significant, but they could make a very significant difference to the Organization's ability to provide its peacekeepers with the support they needed and to their ability to carry out the mandates which the Member States had given them.

5. The emergency request had two objectives: first, to provide more effective and sustained support to the approximately 58,000 peacekeeping personnel currently deployed in the field, who put their lives on the line every day to carry out the mandates entrusted to them, often under very risky and unpredictable conditions; and, second, to meet the urgent need for people to put in place systems and procedures that would ensure that when the next crisis arose, as it surely would, the Organization would be better equipped to cope with it. That reform was clearly needed, but it could not be implemented without

resources. It was unrealistic to expect that it could be implemented by officials whose capacity was already stretched to the breaking point by the demands of running the current operations; the Committee was undoubtedly aware of the rapid and unforeseen growth in United Nations peacekeeping operations over the past 18 months.

6. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations must be provided with sufficient staff and an appropriate structure to enable it to plan, deploy, manage and support peacekeeping operations effectively. The Panel's proposals, if implemented, would achieve that essential goal. The proposals addressed a wide range of needs, including structural changes such as the establishment of an Office of Military and Civilian Police Affairs, headed by an Assistant Secretary-General, which would include a stand-alone Civilian Police Division and a strengthened and restructured Military Division. That Office would give greater priority to the relations between the Department and troop- and police-contributing countries, and would allow the Department to strengthen dialogue and consultations between the Secretariat, the Security Council and troop and police contributors throughout the life of a mission, in order to enable all parties to make informed decisions on all aspects of the operation. A frank exchange of information and open dialogue were essential if the Organization was to retain the trust which Member States must have in it if they were to be willing to provide the resources needed and to assume the risks inherent in the deployment of peacekeepers.

7. Other proposals included the transformation of the Lessons Learned Unit into the Peacekeeping Doctrine and Best Practices Unit and the establishment of a small Criminal Law and Judicial Advisory Unit, a Gender Unit and a public information unit. All those proposed changes reflected the multidisciplinary nature of peacekeeping in the twenty-first century, and must be authorized if the Organization was to keep up with the changes in the environment facing peacekeepers.

8. Equally important was the challenge of equipping the Organization with the tools it needed to anticipate and understand the root causes of the conflicts it was asked to address. Recently, the Security Council had reaffirmed its belief that the Secretariat's information-gathering and analysis capacity must be improved. The proposed establishment of the Executive Committee on Peace and Security Information and Strategic Analysis Secretariat would answer that need. A small, multidisciplinary unit made up of staff from different backgrounds, it would serve the vital function of providing cross-cutting analysis to the Executive Committee on Peace and Security. It would also make it possible for the Organization to make much better use of the wealth of information already existing within the United Nations system and in open public sources; ensure that the humanitarian and development perspectives were incorporated into strategic analyses and mission planning; facilitate better cooperation and coordination between the Department of Political Affairs, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and other parts of the system, as called for by Member States; provide analytical support for the system's formulation of policy options and medium- to long-term strategies of a cross-cutting nature, which increasingly required a multidisciplinary approach; and help to improve the Organization's ability, in close collaboration with the Member States concerned, to analyse and focus its resources on the root causes of potential conflicts.

9. In the Millennium Declaration, the participating Heads of State and Government had resolved to make the United Nations more effective in maintaining peace and security by giving it the resources and tools it needed for conflict prevention, peaceful resolution of disputes, peacekeeping, post-conflict peace-building and reconstruction, and had requested the General Assembly to consider the Panel's recommendations expeditiously.

10. He shared the concern of many members of the Committee about the need to give higher priority to resources for development. He had consistently called on Member States to increase their development assistance and he hoped that the international community's attention would be focused on that issue by the forthcoming high-level event on financing for development. It would be folly, however, to imagine that Member States could make adequate resources available for development by preventing the United Nations from developing adequate peacekeeping capacity. Development and peacekeeping were not alternatives, but necessary complements to each other, and resources were needed for both. The worst enemy of development was war. For countries in conflict and for their neighbours, peace was a prerequisite for development, and money spent on peacekeeping and conflict prevention would help to create or preserve the

conditions in which development could take place. If the changes proposed by the Panel were accepted, the Organization would be better equipped and better prepared to help protect the peoples of war-torn countries from further suffering. If not, it was those peoples who would pay the price, not the powerful or the privileged of the world. For the latter, it was a matter of improving the Organization's capacity; for the poor and powerless, it could literally be a matter of life and death. The Committee must not forget that essential truth in deliberating on how best to strengthen the Organization's mission in the area of peace and security. The needs were clear, the demands were urgent and the solutions were within reach.

11. Another issue about which he felt very strongly was staff security. It was simply unacceptable that United Nations staff, who often braved dangers to which many armies did not expose their soldiers, should be given anything less than the international community's utmost support. Too many tragedies had occurred over the past year, from Africa to West Timor, and he hoped that the Committee would take the necessary measures to enable the Organization to give that issue the highest priority. He had proposed a number of measures for professionalizing and strengthening the Organization's security management system through changes in the number of personnel, the training they received, the services they provided and the equipment they used. Clearly, the current system of funding did not work. He therefore hoped that the Committee would endorse his recommendations so that the United Nations could take effective action to improve the security and safety of its staff. That was surely the least to which they were entitled and the least that the Member States and the Organization could do for them.

12. **Mr. Levitte** (France), speaking on behalf of the European Union, the associated countries Bulgaria, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Romania and Slovakia and, in addition, Liechtenstein, said that those countries fully supported the proposals contained in the Secretary-General's report (A/55/502), which should be implemented without delay. The report of the Panel emphasized the urgency of the changes needed to improve support for peacekeeping operations throughout the world, particularly in Africa, and to ensure that the United Nations Secretariat was fully capable of handling the day-to-day conduct of peacekeeping operations. For the many African countries which faced serious crises, the Organization's support was essential, as it was often the only assistance they received to help them to restore peace.

13. The United Nations support for conflict resolution was only one of its many missions. Priority must also be given, in particular, to United Nations action to promote development. Those two approaches were, however, complementary. The effort which Member States were being asked to make to begin implementing the Panel's recommendations was in no way a substitute for the effort they must make to promote development. The cost of that effort seemed very reasonable when compared to the levels of the regular and peacekeeping budgets.

14. Nearly three months after the Millennium Summit, the Member States had an obligation to deliver results. Any failure to take action immediately, or at least by the end of the year, to implement the initial proposals of the Secretary-General would be incomprehensible to Governments and public opinion. He was pleased to note that the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, the Fifth Committee and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) were discussing the aspects of that vital issue that were within their competence, since that was the best way to develop a prompt and practical response to the priority needs identified in the Panel's report.

15. **Mr. Kolby** (Norway) said that it was the joint responsibility of all Member States to enable the United Nations to meet the increasingly complex challenges of peacekeeping. The growing demand for peacekeeping underscored the need to close the gap between the tasks which the Organization was asked to perform and the resources provided for that purpose. The zero nominal growth policy had become increasingly counterproductive both in terms of United Nations reform and in terms of enabling the Organization to respond to new challenges.

16. His Government welcomed the Panel's report and the Secretary-General's views on its implementation. Once the Panel's recommendations were implemented, they would significantly strengthen the Organization's capacity to plan and conduct complex peace operations. He strongly supported the proposals for the strengthening of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and other parts of the Secretariat involved

in the conduct of peace operations, as well as the proposal to establish the Executive Committee on Peace and Security Information and Strategic Analysis Secretariat, which would serve as an important early-warning tool that would strengthen the Organization's conflict prevention capacity. Such a secretariat would also be helpful to the Security Council in its work on mandates for future operations.

17. The proposals for an increase of $7.5 million in the regular budget, with 35 additional posts, and an increase of $14.7 million in the support account for peacekeeping operations, with 214 additional posts, to implement the proposals for the period from 1 July 2000 to 30 June 2001 seemed very modest compared to the current level of the regular budget and peacekeeping costs. Resources for peace operations should not be increased at the expense of resources for development. The international community must take a long-term approach to development in order to build sustainable peace. Norway's security and development policy had long focused on a comprehensive approach to development and peace-building. Development could not take place without peace and stability. Peace depended on development and justice; those issues could not be separated.

18. Peacekeeping was one of the core tasks which the United Nations had been founded to perform. The recent expansion of the Organization's crucial role in that area, despite limited resources, demonstrated the continued importance of that task. His delegation supported the Panel's recommendations and the proposals for their implementation, and it accepted their financial implications. A prompt decision must be taken on the resource requirements for implementing the Panel's recommendations.

19. **Mr. Heinbecker** (Canada) said that the Secretary-General was to be commended for his leadership on the crucial issue of United Nations peace operations. The Panel appointed by him had made concrete and practical recommendations and had presented pragmatic and practicable ideas for change. The enhancement of the Organization's capacity to conduct peace operations would depend on effective partnerships between the Secretariat, the organs of the United Nations system, other international organizations, local civil societies and Member States. Already, there were signs that such partnerships were coalescing.

20. Some delegations attached less importance to the Panel's report than others. His delegation, for its part, considered the successful implementation of the Panel's recommendations to be crucial to the Organization's future. The Fifth Committee had an important role to play in that regard. The stakes transcended diplomatic games and anachronistic ideologies. He appealed to Member States that had the means, but apparently not the will, to fund United Nations reform to pay their assessed contributions on time and without conditions. The Organization's acknowledged failures were not a reason to abandon it. The current and prospective consumers of United Nations peacekeeping services should realize that the arguments of those who opposed the proposed peacekeeping reform lacked validity.

21. In response to some of the concerns that had been raised, he said that peacekeeping and peace-building could not be kept separate if the United Nations was to be able to respond to the multifaceted needs of countries affected by war, which included re-establishment of the rule of law, economic recovery, protection of rights, particularly minority rights, and good governance practices. Likewise, the experience of the past few years, when peacekeeping costs had risen from a low of $600 million to a high of over $2.5 billion, had shown that such increases need not lead to a reduction in funds for development. Indeed, the reverse was true: peace and security were preconditions for development, and no one would invest scarce funds in countries where they risked being consumed in conflict. Lastly, it was not true that the needs of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations were greatly exaggerated. The request for emergency resources should be considered in the context of the Millennium Declaration, in which Member States recognized the importance of enhancing the Organization's peacekeeping capacity. In that connection, he welcomed the steps already taken towards a comprehensive review of the Department, noting that the Panel recommended reforms that addressed comprehensively the problems that the use of gratis personnel had been intended to overcome.

22. Many Governments had lost faith in the ability of the United Nations to run peace operations. The longer the Organization's reputation was left to languish, the more reluctant Governments and populations would be to participate in those operations. Enhancing the Organization's capacity to plan and implement

complex operations was vital if the confidence of troop-contributing countries was to be re-established. In addition, troop contributors must be able to participate fully, as a matter of right, in Security Council consultations on the missions in which their troops were participating. They must also have access to the analysis and information available to the Secretariat.

23. Given the likelihood of new missions and the demands and complexities of the existing missions, there could be no doubt of the need to implement the Panel's recommendations and to find the necessary resources. Also, with approximately 58,000 personnel in the field, the number of support staff must clearly be increased. Provision of the resources requested by the Secretary-General would be a wise and cost-effective investment. The speed with which the request had been brought before the Committee was commendable and it was to be hoped that the Advisory Committee would finalize its report on the resource requirements for implementation of the Panel's report in a similarly expeditious manner.

24. **Mr. Sun** Joun-yung (Republic of Korea) said that his delegation, which had consistently supported the reforms undertaken by the Secretary-General, welcomed the report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations (A/55/305-S/2000/809) and looked forward to the issuance of the report of the Advisory Committee on the resource requirements for the implementation of the Panel's report. Strengthened strategic planning and coordination, effective mission guidance and streamlined procedures were vital to the success of peacekeeping missions, which were becoming increasingly complex. There was a need, in that connection, to enhance the Organization's capacity for information management and strategic analysis and the ability of Headquarters to plan and support peace operations.

25. Regarding the report introduced by the Secretary-General (A/55/207 and Add.1), his delegation supported a measured increase in resources for electoral assistance, which it regarded as an integral part of post-conflict peace-building. It also endorsed the strengthening of needs assessment missions, which were a prerequisite for electoral assistance activities. It supported in principle the strengthening of the capacity of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations so as to ensure effective support of peacekeeping operations in the field. Over the past decade, as peacekeeping activities had expanded and contracted, the Organization had learned the painful lessons of first losing, and then having to rebuild, valuable staff capacity and expertise. Staff shortages were acutely felt in some sections of the Department. However, the Secretary-General's request for 181 additional support account posts required more detailed justification. There was a need for a comprehensive review, based on objective management and productivity criteria, to determine a baseline staffing level that would allow the Department to respond flexibly to changing needs.

26. The report of the Secretary-General did not address the financial implications in respect of each individual peace operation such as "quick impact projects", disarmament, demobilization and reintegration activities, and human rights activities proposed, nor did it address the recommendation concerning the conversion of support account posts to the regular budget and other matters still under consideration. Any future increase in resources for peace operations should not come at the expense of resources for development.

27. Lastly, his delegation was concerned about the number of qualified staff, particularly young staff members, leaving the Organization. That problem should be addressed as a matter of priority. He looked forward, in that connection, to the successful implementation of the current human resources management reform initiatives.

28. **Mr. Holbrooke** (United States of America) welcomed the Secretary-General's bold and timely initiative in establishing the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations. The Organization faced mounting demands for increasingly complex operations in the most vulnerable parts of the globe. Against that background, it was the responsibility of Member States to overcome their differences, which were minor and manageable, and to take decisive steps to ensure that the Organization could realize its ambitious and ever important peacekeeping goals.

29. He was pleased to note that the Fifth Committee was working to make the peacekeeping scale more equitable and up to date. With regard to operational reform, he welcomed the practical report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations. Now, the Committee must take up the critical question of resources. It was well known that the Organization's most challenging and important operations faced

desperate shortfalls in terms of troops, equipment and training and that the capacity of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations was inadequate. Currently, there were only 400 staff members to manage 58,000 men and women serving in 15 peacekeeping operations around the world, and, with the loss of gratis personnel, the Department's military expertise had been reduced from over 100 officers to a mere 32. He therefore welcomed the Secretary-General's intention to conduct a comprehensive review of the Department and looked forward to the development of a global logistical strategy, a comprehensive staffing strategy and an "on-call list" to facilitate rapid deployment. Other priorities included the restructuring and strengthening of the Military and Civilian Police Division, inter alia through the establishment of a legal advice capacity; the strengthening of the Office of Operations and the Field Administration and Logistics Division; and the enhancement of the Organization's capacity in the areas of policy planning and information analysis and of the public information component of peace operations. Also, there was a need for an additional Assistant Secretary-General, as recommended by the Panel, to help manage the Department effectively. The Secretary-General's statement that any increase in staff must be accompanied by human resources and management reform was most welcome. Troop-contributing countries must have a stronger role in the consultative process and in the personnel structure of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations.

30. The concern that peacekeeping reform might be undertaken at the expense of funds for development, was unfounded. Indeed, peacekeeping could be essential for development, as it had been in Mozambique, where effective peacekeeping had contributed to the attainment of the highest economic growth rate in Africa.

31. He recognized that there was deep concern about his country's arrears and their effect on peacekeeping operations, in particular, the delays in reimbursing troop-contributing countries. The current United States administration took that problem very seriously. At the end of 1999, the United States had paid down $100 million of its arrears to the United Nations, and it was preparing to remit an additional $582 million by the end of the year. It should be noted that, in fact, overall United States contributions to the United Nations had increased dramatically. In the fiscal year 2000/2001, his Government would contribute $3.6 billion to the United Nations, including voluntary contributions; that represented an increase of almost $1 billion, which had been fully supported by the United States Congress. It was essential that the necessary steps should be taken to place the Organization on a stable financial footing and thus ensure that the next Congress would continue that very positive trend.

32. For people in strife-torn areas, the presence of a United Nations peace operation often meant the difference between life and death. Unless Member States moved decisively, those who threatened peacekeepers across the globe might draw the conclusion that the United Nations lacked the will and cohesion to perform that basic function. Peacekeepers deserved the support of Member States and a credible structure to maintain and manage peacekeeping operations.

33. **Mr. Erdös** (Hungary) said that in the past decade the United Nations had had to face unprecedented challenges in peacekeeping operations owing to the growing demand for such operations, the increasingly complex nature of the activities and a glaring lack of resources. During Hungary's membership in the Security Council, his delegation had seen how unwieldy United Nations peacekeeping efforts could be. The situation had not improved, and his delegation therefore strongly supported the proposals aimed at providing the United Nations with the tools it required in order to overcome the difficulties which it had recently encountered.

34. The Committee currently had before it reliable documentation which demonstrated all too clearly the enormous gap between the demands of the times and the Organization's ability to meet its commitments. His delegation urged that an early start should be made to implement the proposals put forward by the Secretary-General. In view of the Organization's recent bitter experience, the international community had no time to lose in commencing a review and reform of United Nations peacekeeping operations. At the same time, that task would demand careful reflection because of the wide range of United Nations activities.

35. As had been correctly pointed out at the Millennium Summit, economic and social development remained the cornerstone of the Organization's activities. The task of making the United Nations more effective and resolute in its peacekeeping operations

should in no way be considered incompatible with that endeavour. Indeed, the chances for development depended to a great extent on the success of peacekeeping operations. His delegation hoped that the Committee would be able to help by ensuring that the resources were available for urgently needed action in the field of peacekeeping operations.

36. **Mr. Galuška** (Czech Republic) said that the commitments made by the Heads of State and Government in the Millennium Declaration regarding the implementation of the proposals in the report of the Panel were very important for the future of the United Nations. The time had come for a comprehensive reform of the whole peacekeeping system. While detailed consideration of the far-reaching recommendations in the Panel's report would require some time, that should not serve as a pretext for procrastination. The Committee's work was of the utmost importance and should be given priority by all delegations in order to ensure that concrete results were achieved before Christmas. The Czech Republic, which contributed both financial resources and troops to peacekeeping operations, offered its unequivocal support for the changes proposed by the Panel.

37. **Ms. Plepyte** (Lithuania) said that, as history demonstrated, some United Nations peacekeeping missions had not achieved their objectives, owing to inadequate resources or mandates or because of a lack of a comprehensive vision. Her delegation concurred with the view of the Secretary-General that the capability of the United Nations Headquarters to provide support for United Nations peacekeepers in the field was seriously limited. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations was stretched too thin and immediate priority should be given to strengthening it in terms of both personnel and funding.

38. A number of the recommendations put forward in the Panel's report needed comprehensive review and study. To that end, significant efforts had already been made by other United Nations bodies. The Security Council and the Secretariat had already set out their views concerning the Panel's recommendations, and the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations and the Advisory Committee would, it was hoped, soon conclude and report on their work.

39. It was important to proceed with the implementation of those recommendations that could be implemented beginning in January 2001. While some recommendations deserved more profound consideration, the desire expressed at the Millennium Summit to consider the recommendations of the Panel expeditiously must be respected. Enhancement of the peacekeeping functions of the United Nations must not in any way overshadow the Organization's development activities, in particular those aimed at eradicating poverty and addressing the special needs of Africa, as those activities were complementary to peacekeeping operations.

40. **Ms. Silot Bravo** (Cuba) noted that the Fifth Committee had yet to receive the reports on the Panel's report to be submitted by the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations and the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee), which were still actively engaged in completing their work. It also did not yet have the report of the Advisory Committee concerning the decisions to be taken by the Fourth Committee. Her delegation hoped that, in accordance with the rules of the General Assembly which applied to all items on the agenda, the formal debate and consideration of the budget implications of the Panel's report would not take place until the views of the Fourth Committee were known and the report of the Advisory Committee was available. It would make a formal statement on the substance of the matter at that time.

41. **The Chairman** assured the representative of Cuba that the Committee would not begin a formal debate on the subject until the report of the Advisory Committee was available.

The meeting rose at noon.